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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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OES-07 /127 W
----------109424 080630Z /23/43
P R 071216Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2082
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MADRAS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USLO PEKING

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR, IN, US
SUBJECT: PRESS VIEW OF LIKELY TOPICS FOR CARTER-DESAI TALKS

1. SUMMARY - THE INDIAN PRESS DOES NOT EXPECT DRAMATIC RESULTS FROM PRIME MINISTER DESAI'S TWELVE-DAY OVERSEAS TOUR. TARAPUR AND NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS ARE EXPECTED TO CONSTITUTE THE NUMBER ONE TOPIC OF DISCUSSION BETWEEN DESAI AND PRESIDENT CARTER WITH ATTENTION ALSO LIKELY TO BE GIVEN TO DEVELOPMENTS IN AFRICA AND AFGHANISTAN, INDIA'S EXPORT OF RHESUS MONKEYS, US-CHINESE RELATIONS, DISARMAMENT AND INDIAN MILITARY PURCHASES. END SUMMARY.
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2. WITH PRIME MINISTER DESAI ON HIS WAY TO WASHINGTON VIA TEHRAN, BRUSSELS, LONDON AND POINTS WEST, THE INDIAN PRESS IS ADDING SOME COMMENTARY TO ITS EARLIER REPORTING OF PREPARATIONS FOR DESAI'S US VISIT. NO DRAMATIC ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE EXPECTED DURING DESAI'S TWELVE-DAY OVERSEAS TOUR, WHICH FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE HAS BILLED

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AS AN EXERCISE TO REINFORCE PERSONAL TIES WITH PM CALLAGHAN AND PRESIDENT CARTER AND TO STRNGTHEN BI-LATERAL RELATIONS. EXPECTATIONS CONCERNING THE LIKELY TONE OF DESAI'S WASHINGTON DISCUSSIONS VARY. THE "INDIAN EXPRESS" WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT, T.V. PARASURAM, THINKS THE VISIT WILL BE MARKED BY "CORDIALITY, FRIEND-LINESS, MUTUAL TRUST AND CONFIDENCE." UNNA, FOR THE "STATESMAN", EXPECTS A "SERIOUS BUSINESS-LIKE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS".

3. TARAPUR AND THE SAFEGUARDS ISSUE ARE WIDELY SEEN IN INDIA AS THE NUMBER ONE TOPIC OF DISCUSSION IN WASHINGTON. IN FACT, FOR A LONG TIME, NO OTHER TOPIC RECEIVED MUCH ATTENTION. DESAI'S STAND ON TARAPUR AND SAFEGUARDS IS ROUNDLY SUPPORTED.
HERE ARE SOME OTHER TOPICS WE HAVE SEEN MENTIONED RECENTLY IN CONNECTION WITH THE PRIME MINIYIER'S TALKS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER.

4. AFRICA - PRESS ATTENTION TO AFRICA INCREASED SIGNI-FICANTLY A FEW DAYS AGO, APPARENTLY AS A RESULT OF THE TOUGH LINE EXPRESSED BY SEVERAL GOVERNMENTS AT THE NATO SUMMIT. DESAI, ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, IS EXPECTED TO REITERATE INDIA'S BELIEF THAT AFRICA SHOULD NOT BECOME AN ARENA OF BIG POWER RIVALRY. IN BRUSSELS, HE WENT BE-YOND EARLIER GOI PRONOUNCEMENTS WHEN, IN ANSWER TO A
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QUESTION ABOUT CUBA'S ROLE IN AFRICA, HE SAID " I DO NOT THINK COUNTRIES SHOULD INTERFERE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES." (NEW DELHI 8802) NEVERTHELESS, WE HAVE SEEN VERY LITTLE APPRECIATION IN THE INDIAN PRESS OF THE WESTERN VIEW OF SOVIET ACTIVITY IN AFRICA. AN EDITORIAL IN THE JUNE 7 EDITION OF THE " TIMES OF INDIA", FOR EXAMPLE, COMMENTS THAT "MR. BREZHNEV IS NOT TO BLAME IF HE HAS COME TO BE CONVINCED THAT CERTAIN CIRCLES IN THE WEST ARE DETERMINED TO DAMAGE THE SOVIET UNION AND REVIVE THE COLD WAR." THE EDITORIAL GOES ON TO SUGGEST THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS ONLY DOING IN AFRICA, THROUGH CUBA, WHAT THE US DID IN VIETNAM AND ELSEWHERE FOR YEARS THROUGH ITS OWN PROXIES. M.V. KAMATH, WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT FOR THE "TIMES OF INDIA" SAW IN THE GROWING CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE US AND THE USSR IN AFRICA THE SEED OF A RPBLEM IN INDO-AMERICAN RE-LATIONS, IMPLYING THE AMERICA MAY ASK, AND NEW DELHI REFUSE, THAT INDIA ASSUME A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN DIS-SUADING SOVIET/CUBAN ADVENTURES IN AFRICA. REPORTS OF DESAI'S AND VAJPAYEE'S TALKS IN LONDON SUGGEST CONCERN ON THEIR PART THAT EVENTS IN AFRICA MIGHT AFFECT DETENTE AND DISARMAMENT.

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5. CHINA - CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH REPORTS OF GROWING
TENSIONS BETWEEN THE UPERPOWERS IS THE OCCASIONALLY-
EXPRESSED FEAR BY COMMENTATORS THAT THE US MAY SUPPLY
OR SELL ADVANCED WEAPONS TO CHINA TO HELP PERSUADE THE
SOVIETS TO FOCUS THEIR ATTENTION CLOSER TO HOME.

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARAGRAPH 7)
6. MONKEYS - THE MADRAS "HINDU'S " WILL-INFORMED DELHI
CORRESPONDENT, G.K. REDDY, BELIEVES THAT " AMONG THE AGENDA
ITEMS SUGGESTED BY THE AMERICAN SIDE FOR DISCUSSION IN
WASHINGTON, WHETHER AT THE LEVEL OF PRESIDENT CARTER
AND THE PRIME MINISTER OR DOWN THE LINE BY OFFICIALS OF
THE TWO DELEGATIONS IS THE QUESTION OF RESUMPTION OF
MONKEY EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES. THE PRIME MINISTER
HAS BEEN RECEIVING A LARGE NUMBER OF LETTERS FROM A
REPRESENTATIVE CROSS-SECTION OF AMERICAN PEOPLE HAILING THE
BAN ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS AND A REPLY HAS BEEN SENT TO EACH
ONE OF THESE LETTERS BY THE INDIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON.
AND MR. DESAI IS GOING TO BE EQUALLY FIRM ON THIS MONKEY
BUSINESS AS ON THE QUESTION OF DISCRIMINATORY SAFEGUARDS
THAT THE US
IS TRYING TO IMPOSE IN THE NAME OF NON-

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PROLIFERATION."

7. DISARMAMENT - PRESENTED BY THE PRIME MINISTER AS A MAJOR THEME OF HIS TRIP, DISARMAMENT ISSUES ARE EXPECTED HERE TO OCCUPY MUCH OF DESAI'S TIME. AGAINST A BACK-GROUND OF GENERAL DISAPPOINTMENT IN THE PRESS WITH PROGRESS OF THE SSOD IT IS THOUGHT DESAI WILL ADVOCATE THAT THE SUPERPOWERS TAKE THE LEAD IN A SERIOUS DIS-ARMAMENT, PRIMARILY NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT EFFORT, WITH THE MONEY SAVED SOMEHOW BEING CHANNELED TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AS AID. IN THIS CONNECTION, MANY JOURNALISTS EXPECT DESAI TO SHOW INTEREST IN THE PROGRESS OF THE SALT TALKS AND PRESS FOR WITHDRAWAL OR REDUCTION OF THE US NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. THE PRIME MINISTER AT HIS JUNE 6 PRESS CONFERENCE IN LONDON, WHEN ASKED FOR HIS VIEW ON THE SOVIET PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, IS REPORTED TO HAVE REPLIED: "MUCH MORE THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE SOVIET UNION, THERE IS ALSO THE PRESENCE OF THE VNITED STATES."

8. AFGHANISTAN. - IN ADDITION TO EARLIER REPORTING (NEW DELHI 8749), WE NOTE THAT PARASUAM IN THE "INDIAN EXPRESS" BELIEVES THAT DESAI WILL IMPART THE"RELAXED" INDIAN VIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN TO PRESIDENT CARTER IN AN EFFORT TO PREVENT HASTY US JUDGMENTS ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS THERE.

9. INDIAN MILITARY PURCHASES. - THIS IS THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DISARMAMENT STORY. THE WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS FOR THE INDIAN EXPRESS AND THE "STATESMAN" EXPECT THE TWO LEADERS TO DISCUSS INDIAN PLANS TO ACQUIRE MODERN WARPLANES. THE US IS SAID TO BE ANXIOUS THAT INDIAN PURCHASES NOT SET OF AN ARMS RACE IN
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THE SUBCONTINENT. ON THE OTHER HAND, INDIA WILL POINT OUT, ACCORDING TO PARASURAM, THAT INDIA "CAN-NOT DISARM HERSELF UNILATERALLY IN A DANGEROUS WORLD."
BLOOD

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